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## **Testimony for Proposed Bill 5592 AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN PUBLIC HOUSING**

The Connecticut Apartment Association (CTAA), the state chapter of the National Apartment Association, represents over 26,000 units, the largest number of apartments represented by any association in the state. The National Apartment Association represents more than 5.2 million apartment homes throughout the United States and Canada. The CTAA **strongly opposes Raised Bill 5592** because it would adversely affect a property owner's right to verify reliable and acceptable income.

In choosing to rent, especially with section 8 vouchers, there is a required system of proving income to qualify for such programs. Keeping in mind, that the benefits of a state run program should have and currently do have a strict set of guidelines in our rental communities to ensure that all parties are treated fairly and equally. It is imperative that this system be able to maintain the ability to quantify income and be proved via legal documentation, for example court documents mandating payment of child support from one party to another.

The language in House Bill 5592, if passed, would allow applicants for public housing and section 8 to include non-court ordered child support payments in the determination of ability to pay rent. This would leave apartment owners and managers with little recourse should the non-court mandated child support end. If the child support is not mandated by the courts, then who will enforce that the payments continue? And if those payments stop abruptly, this may alter the tenant's ability to afford the housing rental payments. If this occurs, the owner or manager would have no other choice but to start eviction for non-payment of rent thus causing an undue financial burden on property owners and managers that could have been prevented in the first place by using only legal documentation to prove source of income.

Furthermore, if the non-court ordered child support be required to be included in income verification, then how will proof be presented to an owner or manager? There will no longer be this vital legal document to provide proof of this income rather than the tenants own word? It is highly unfair to both parties if there is no legal way to determine if the child support payments are an accurate and verifiable statement from the potential renter. As it stands now, payment is verified through legal court records.

CTAA strongly opposes raised bill 5592 because it ties the hands of apartment owners and community managers in treating the qualification of tenant's income fairly and equally.

**The CTAA *strongly opposes* Raised Bill 5592!**

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